Two party system

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The American government runs off of the basis of a two party system which is where two political parties, in this case democrats and republicans, dominate politics.

The two party system is probably one of the biggest mistakes America has made as a country. George Washington was definitely wrong about a lot of things, however he was spot on when he warned us about the two party system.

The entire basis of a two party system is threatening to our democracy. The whole point of making America an independent nation and giving its citizens the right to vote is so that each citizen had a say in who would run the country and we could then get a president that most accurately represents the country.

If we are confined by labels of democrats and republicans, and the two party system that makes it nearly impossible for a third party candidate to get elected, then most citizens have to pick a candidate that they do not care for.

This creates the "lesser of two evils" phenomenon that we hear about over and over again in this election. Many liberals and conservatives alike are upset with the choices they have of the two political frontrunners.

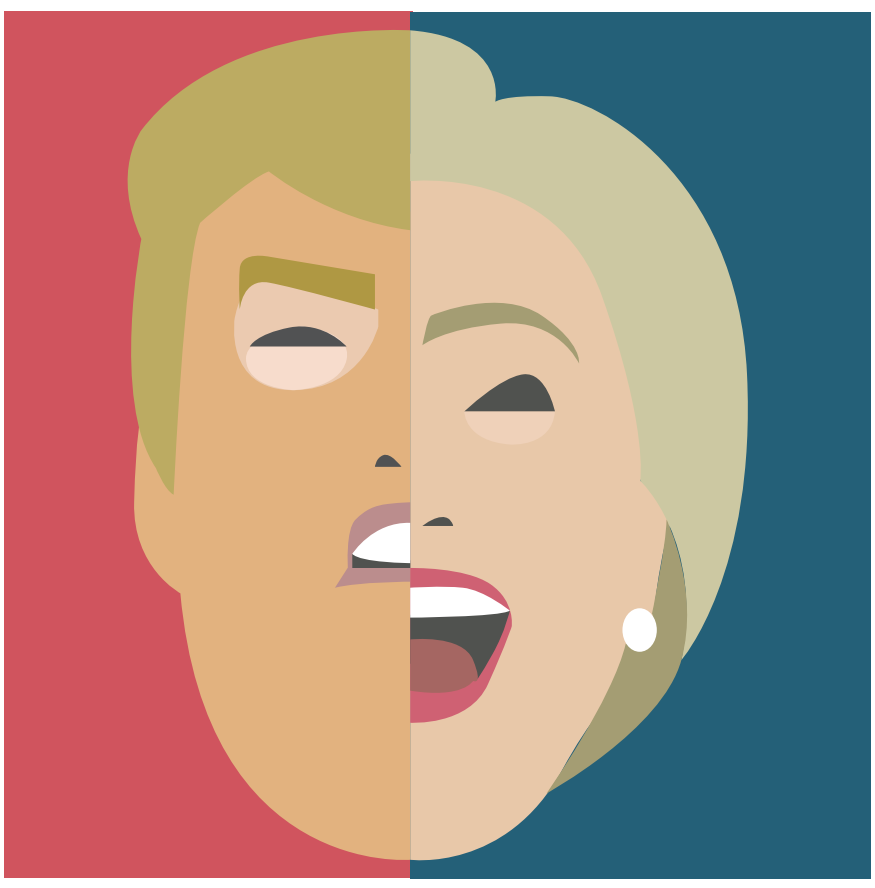
Despite this apprehension towards their party candidates, they still feel obligated to vote for the candidate running on their party's ticket because Trump supporters feel that voting third party is the equivalent of voting for Clinton, and Clinton supporters feel that voting third party is the equivalent of voting for Trump. And they are not entirely wrong.

It is nearly impossible for a third party to win with the way that the electoral college works. In order to get a vote in the electoral college is for a candidate to have plurality, which means they would need at least 50 percent of the popular vote in order to receive an electoral vote.

Historically, the closest we have gotten to this was in 1968 when George Wallace won five states, but even that was not enough to beat Nixon's 301 electoral votes.

The two party system is essentially set up in a way in which nobody except the frontrunners in the two most popular parties can win and this is toxic to our nation.

"We all want a better government but at the end of the day, what do we still have? A two party system, a shady government, and an unbalanced economy," said Katherine Burroughs, a freshman early childhood education major.



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It is apparent that everybody wants what is best for our nation, but it is evident that a two party system is not the way to achieve this. It prevents compromise and civil discussions by instead, leading to fights that have less to do with helping our nation and more to do with labels and insignificant party lines.

"A lot of people have similar end goals but everyone has a vastly different way to achieve them," said Tess Norman, a sophomore graphic designer.

Not only does this put a strain on citizens when they go to vote, but it also affects the way the White House runs. The Senate can never agree on anything because senators feel as though to be a good representative of their party they can only vote with their party. This mindset is harmful, because the senators are supposed to represent the American people, not a specific political party. If the two party system did not exist, a lot more progress would be made and America would be more unified.

First time voters

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Elections are right around the corner, literally. As a sophomore, this election will be my first time voting. To be honest, I have absolutely no idea what I am going to do. Fortunately, for first time voters if you ask, you can have your parent present with you at the poll. Remember, although they are at the polls with you guiding you on where to go, do not let them bamboozle you into voting for who they did.

Voting for the first time is an exciting and scary time. It is exciting because it is one of those moments in teenage years that we look forward to. It is kind of like sweet 16 parties, turning 18, getting your license and going to college. When we grow up, that is what we think about voting. On the other hand, it is scary because it is like a passage into adulthood, like we are stepping over the threshold into adulthood. Terrifying, right?

This is my tip to you, first time voters, do not do it alone. Do not go to the polls alone. I think it is best to go with someone who has done it before and can walk you through it. Make sure you get to the polls though. Since we are of age to vote and express our opinions, we should all exercise our rights. People who have the constitutional right to vote should use it.

I have noticed that some people who can vote do not and then they are usually the ones complaining about who wins. Voting is a big deal and first time voting is an even bigger deal. Voting for the first time gives us insight on how our government is run and how we can somewhat have a say in who gets in the oval office. This generation seems to care more and are more involved in the current election. I anticipate a pretty big turnout from the younger population.

This election is going to affect us, our children, and our grandchildren. All elections are serious, do not get me wrong, but this one is one of the most popular elections in years. The outcome of this election will affect everyone. There will be happy people and there will be the "others" no matter the outcome.

I am not telling you who to vote for. I am just expressing how important it is to exercise your rights. Remember, make sure you are registered and I hope to see many of you with the "I voted" stickers.

Go USA!

Kristin Streetman / The Johnsonian

Special Election

Our Say

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In less than a week, the American people will face a change. As both millenials and members of various minority groups, we feel that it is our duty to vote and help the voices of our various communities.

For each of us, this is the first time that we get to vote for the President of the United States. While some of us may vote for different candidates, we all agree that we cannot vote for Donald Trump. With both his lack of legitimate policy and blatant disregard for minority groups, we find ourselves in a position to be unable to support the current Republican nominee.

As a collective, we do not necessarily condemn the Republican Party, as many in the party have even spoken out against Trump. We simply feel that the Republican Party has poorly chosen their candidate for this election, therefore we cannot show them our support.

As some of us are women and members of the LGBTQIA+ community, we cannot in good conscience vote for Trump because we feel that a Trump presidency would threatenen our rights and safety as human beings, as well as those in other minority groups.

As journalists and those involved in media, we understand that it is our duty to be objective in our professional work. Our opinions do not and should not reflect in our media coverage. However, we collectively believe that, as citizens of this nation, we should still reserve the right to express our views and opinions.

**Note: members of this special edition of Our Say are not regular members of the Editorial Board*

Kristin Streetman/ The Johnsonian